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REMARKS

Claims 2-15 were pending in the present application. By virtue of this response, claim 6 has been amended, and claims 3-5, 15 have been canceled. Accordingly, claims 2, 6-14 are currently under consideration. Amendment and cancellation of certain claims is not to be construed as a dedication to the public of any of the subject matter of the claims as previously presented. No new matter has been added.

Elections/Restrictions

Examiner has withdrawn claim 5 from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention.

Claim 5 has been canceled without prejudice.

Claim Objections

Examiner noted omission of a period in claim 15. Applicant thanks the Examiner for pointing out the omission. Claim 15 has been canceled as described below.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 3-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Ohyama (6,366,548).

Claims 3-4 have been canceled without prejudice.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kajiya et al. (WO 00/36597).

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Claim 6 has been amended to include the feature of "the half wavelength plate directly mounted onto a reflecting surface of the optical axis conversion mirror". Examiner noted that Kajiyama et al. does not explicitly disclose the half wavelength plate being directly mounted onto the reflecting surface of the optical axis conversion mirror.

Claim 15 is also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kajiyama et al.

Claim 15 has been canceled without prejudice.

In addition, claims 7-8, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kajiyama et al.

Claims 7-8 depend from amended claim 6. Applicant submits that claims 7-8 are patentable over the cited references for at least the same reasons as claim 6.

Claims 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kajiyama et al. in view of Nakanishi et al. (5,748,658).

Claims 9-12 depend from amended claim 6. Applicant submits that claims 9-12 are patentable over the cited references for at least the same reasons as claim 6.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has allowed claims 2, 13-14.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue. If it is determined that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 275412001900. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

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Respectfully submitted,

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